



**THE REFORM PARTY**

AND

**CANADA'S FUTURE.**

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**AN OPEN LETTER**

From the Hon. Oliver Mowat, Premier of Ontario, to the  
Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, M.P. for East York,  
and formerly Premier of Canada.

**WITH AN APPENDIX.**

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# THE REFORM PARTY AND CANADA'S FUTURE

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TORONTO, 12th Dec., 1891.

*To the Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, M.P., etc., etc.:*

MY HONORED AND DEAR FRIEND:—

You and I are among the oldest Canadian Liberals still in public life. Throughout our time, and for long before, the principles of the Liberal party have been British connection, special interest in all that concerns the masses of the people, justice to all classes, creeds and nationalities, pure and economical government, a revenue tariff, and the freest trade with our neighbors practicable and consistent with our position as a self-governing people forming part of the British Empire. Underlying all these has always been the principle of "Canada first." We perceived, and we are glad to know or believe, that in order to be for Canada first it was necessary to be for British connection also. The two things were not incompatible. On the contrary, they were bound up together. As Premier of Canada you had an opportunity, which no other Canadian Liberal has had, of showing the principles of the Liberal party in practice for five years under a Liberal Government and a Liberal Legislature; and all Liberals, and very many Canadians who are not Liberals, are proud of the record which you then made.

Had the result of the elections in 1878 been different we should not now have our present difficulties. We should have had a pure administration of affairs for the last thirteen years.

We should not have had any waste or misapplication of public money. We should have greatly less debt and greatly less taxation. We should have had no war of tariffs. We should have had no Northwest outbreak of our Indians and halfbreeds. We should have had no abnormal exodus of our people.

Let me recount some of the recent events in our history.

#### UNRESTRICTED RECIPROCITY.

In consequence of the depressed condition of Canada, in common with all the countries in the world at the time, such depression having arisen from causes common to all, the people of Canada were induced by the Conservatives in 1878 to try the experiment of a protective policy, contrary to your advice. The promises and expectations which induced that experiment have since been demonstrated to have been mistaken. A protective policy has been shown by experience to afford our people no sound or permanent advantage. On the contrary, it has directly and indirectly added to the burdens of the great body of our people; and our people have become less able to bear those burdens by reason of several successive years of bad crops, and by the further injury which has arisen to our farmers at the instance of our neighbors through the operation of the McKinley tariff. As a remedy for existing evils, the Liberals in the Dominion Parliament, including yourself, adopted as a plank of the Liberal platform Unrestricted Reciprocity of trade in the products natural and manufactured of Canada and the United States. This was a substitute for the so-called National Policy, the McKinley tariff, and other unfriendly devices on the part of the two countries respectively in relation to their mutual intercourse. The adoption of this article of the Liberal platform was approved of by the party generally, including those who had the strongest attachment to British connection.

Our esteemed friend, Mr. Blake, your first successor in the leadership of the Liberal party, and the admired of all Canadians, was almost if not quite alone among Liberals in objecting to the adoption of this plank of the Liberal platform. In his address to the electors of West Durham, he has given powerful reasons

in support of his view, as he always does on every subject. His grounds, as I understand them, were, chiefly, that unrestricted reciprocity would deprive us of needed revenue; that no way of supplying the deficiency had been suggested, and he himself saw no practicable way; that unrestricted reciprocity was less advantageous than commercial union would be; that commercial union would involve or lead to political union; and that Canadians were not prepared for political union, and did not consider that they were dealing with it in endorsing unrestricted reciprocity, though to him that result appeared inevitable. Mr. Blake, however, observed that some of his conclusions were "in their nature speculative and not demonstrable"; and he added, "their realisation may be precipitated, modified or retarded by political and sentimental, as well as commercial and economical considerations, and by events alike beyond our knowledge and our control. They are stated then, by no means dogmatically, which would be absurd, but only as the best forecasts in my power on doubtful matters, about which, had the times allowed, silence might have been more prudent than speech." Mr. Blake's address having been interpreted by some as expressing a desire for political union with the United States, he published a short note correcting this inference. This was the note (11th March, 1891), as published in *THE GLOBE*:—"The contradictory inferences to which a sentence in my Durham letter, detached from its context, has in several quarters unexpectedly given rise, conquer my reluctance to trespass again so soon upon your columns; and I crave space to say that I think political union with the States, though becoming our probable, is by no means our ideal, or as yet our inevitable future."

#### POLITICAL UNION.

I presume that all thinking Liberals feel more or less the difficulties which Mr. Blake suggested, but do not feel them so strongly as he does, and are more hopeful about a solution of them being found without political union.

Liberals were nearly if not quite unanimous in not wanting political union; but they did want unrestricted reciprocity; and

they were not asked to support unrestricted reciprocity except on fair terms, such as would be consistent with British connection and with the honor of Canada. Canadians generally are proud of their status as British subjects, and did not want unrestricted reciprocity if it was to involve a change in their nationality, or could only be obtained on terms to which they could not honorably agree. They did not want it at the expense of handing over to another nation this grand Dominion, so extensive in territory, so mighty in resources, and with such grand national prospects in the future. They did not want it if to obtain or keep it we had to cease to be British subjects, and also to abandon our aspirations for an independent Canada on Canada's ceasing to be part of the British Empire.

We are as much attached to our nation as the people of the United States are to theirs. Their attachment to their nation does our neighbors honor, and intelligent men amongst them cannot regard otherwise our attachment to our nation. As no commercial, or other material advantage, real or supposed, would induce the people of the United States to change their allegiance, so neither, I hope, will the prospect of some material advantage induce Canadians to change their allegiance to the Empire. Liberals did not see that unrestricted reciprocity would have any such effect; they believed that with unchanged political relations unrestricted reciprocity would on the whole be a good thing, for our farmers especially, and through them for the whole community. But unrestricted reciprocity at the price of annexation we were not prepared for. Many of us were not prepared to affirm that unrestricted reciprocity at that price would be for even the material advantage of Canada. It is quite certain that the farms of the United States are heavily mortgaged as well as Canadian farms; and we have no solid ground for assuming that they are less heavily mortgaged than our own farms. So our farmers as a class, or our mechanics as a class, or our laborers as a class, whatever the reasons may be, are not less comfortable on the whole than the farmers, mechanics and laborers of the United States appear to be, though these are harassed by no McKinley tariff, and by no like obstruction to the dealing of the States with one another.



Nor were we prepared to say that no considerations but those of material interest should be taken into account. Most of us held the reverse.

It seemed clear that unrestricted reciprocity would be quite as much for the advantage of our neighbors as of ourselves, and it might, therefore, reasonably be expected that a fair measure would be agreed to without the condition of political union, or of what would amount to political union. To political union we would not agree. To any reciprocity short of unrestricted reciprocity in the manufactures of the two countries it was certain the United States would not agree.

#### THE LAST DOMINION ELECTIONS.

For myself, I accepted these views as regards both British connection and unrestricted reciprocity; and when asked by the Dominion leaders to join with others in active work for the party at the last general election, as I had done at all previous Dominion elections since I returned to public life, I did so very heartily. I believed that it would be of immense service to Canada to effect a change of Government at Ottawa; or even to effect an increase in the number of Liberal members, though the election should not result in a change of Government. I believed that unrestricted reciprocity would be a good thing, and that the attachment of our people to British connection was so strong and had borne so many tests that it would stand this test also.

I expressed these sentiments for you also, by your request, at the meetings in East York which I attended on your behalf. I was reported at the time as saying of you in substance as follows:—

“Mr. Mackenzie thinks it important that the present Ottawa Government should be defeated for all the evil it has done in the past, for all the evil it is doing now, and for all the evil it will be certain to do in the future if it gets a renewal of power. With respect to the issues which are interesting the people now, I am authorized and instructed by him to say that he cherishes those loyal British feelings which you have always known him to have,



and which he has taken every suitable occasion during the last 30 years to express. He sees no reason why he should not feel as strongly in favor of British connection as in early days. He thinks also that it is of importance that we should have reciprocity between this country and the United States in the natural products and the manufactures of the two countries. He is thoroughly in accord with his party in that respect. There are some matters in connection with it on which he has publicly stated his views. He has declared himself as not in favor of a zollverein or of commercial union; but he is satisfied that in seeking unrestricted reciprocity we are acting strictly in accord with the wishes of men who desire a continuance of British connection. . . . If the Americans will not agree to complete reciprocity, it is quite certain they will not agree to a partial measure. It can be demonstrated that unrestricted reciprocity would be an advantage to the United States as well as to Canada. No doubt they would like us to give our country to them. That we never will do. But as a business people, when they see that our loyalty and national sentiment will not allow us to give more than unrestricted reciprocity, it is reasonable to believe that a sensible people will not refuse what will be an advantage to them, though they cannot get what they would prefer."

The Liberal party having adopted in their platform this plank of unrestricted reciprocity, the Conservative leaders and public journals raised for party purposes the cry that unrestricted reciprocity would lead to political union, and they asserted that the Liberal leaders contemplated and desired political union. This at the last general election for the Dominion was the Conservative answer, both to the arguments of unrestricted reciprocity, and to every charge of maladministration made against the Conservative Government; and so strong is the attachment of Canadian people of all classes to British connection, and so sensitive in regard to everything that might seem to endanger it, that the Government obtained a majority at the elections, notwithstanding the collapse of the National Policy, and in spite of the bad legislation and bad government with which the Conservative Administration was chargeable.

## THE ANNEXATION MOVEMENT.

Since that time discontent with the Conservative Government has increased, in consequence of the scandals unearthed at Ottawa; the proof afforded by the census and otherwise of the failure of the so-called National Policy to realize the expectations from it; and the continued discussion of the advantages of free trade relations with the United States. As a result, a disposition has been manifested in some quarters to favor even political union with the United States as the best means of obtaining such reciprocity, and perhaps as otherwise desirable. A distinguished gentleman, resident amongst us, has for some years advocated that view strongly and perseveringly, and has insisted that political union was for every reason both our best policy and our manifest destiny. One Conservative member of the Ontario Legislature has recently adopted the same view, has openly advocated it, and has induced a public meeting in his own constituency, North Essex, to pass a resolution in favor of annexation.

## NORTH ESSEX.

Too much importance may have been attached to that resolution as expressive of the public sentiment in Essex, for at a subsequent meeting at Windsor (19th November, 1891), a contrary resolution was passed. It was moved by a Liberal, and the report which I have seen does not mention any dissentients. The resolution declared, "That it is the sense of this meeting that there is nothing in the condition of affairs in Canada at present to justify despondency as regards the future, and we deprecate the idea that the people of this country desire any change in its political condition, and we denounce the few malcontents who are thrusting themselves forward and attempting to create a feeling of disloyalty and distrust"; etc. Still more recently, viz., 27th November last, the County Council of the same county passed a like resolution with but one dissentient voice. This resolution was moved by a prominent Liberal and seconded by a Conservative, and was as follows:—"Whereas certain persons of more or less prominence within the county have recently entered into an

agitation for annexation to the United States, we the members of the County Council, representing our loyal, free and enlightened constituents, desire to place on record our firm belief and conviction that no country possesses a better system of government or more admirable institutions than our beloved land; and that while desiring to live on terms of peace and friendliness with the great country lying to the south of us, we hereby repudiate all desire or intention of becoming identified with it, preferring to remain under the glorious flag beneath which our country has become great and progressive and to retain all our existing conditions, which have secured equality and justice to all creeds, nationalities and conditions of men."

#### WOODSTOCK MEETING.

The previous resolution in favor of political union encouraged the friends of annexation elsewhere, and a public meeting was called for Mr. White, to be held in my riding, North Oxford, in the loyal Town of Woodstock, the county town of the banner county of Canadian Liberalism; and we know from a letter read at the meeting, as well as from other circumstances, that Mr. White and those who got up the meeting, were confident of carrying a resolution in favor of annexation. On the other hand, there was a disposition amongst the opponents of annexation to treat the meeting with contempt and not to attend it. I saw that this course would not be wise, and at the last moment almost, our friends decided on attending. The result was, that the anti-annexationists at the meeting numbered twelve to one, and their position was expressed by the following resolution:—

"That the people of Oxford of all parties are deeply attached to their beloved Sovereign, the Queen of Great Britain; that they proudly recognize the whole British Empire as their country, and rejoice that Canada is part of that empire; that Canadians have the most friendly feelings towards the people of the United States, and desire the extension of their trade relations with them; that, while differing among ourselves as to the extent of the reciprocity to be desired or agreed to, we repudiate any suggestion that in order to accomplish this object Canadians should

change their allegiance, or consent to the surrender of the Dominion to any foreign power by annexation, political union or otherwise."

The boldness of this annexation experiment in Oxford, though it came to nothing, has, in connection with some other circumstances, called my attention to an apparent drift in some sections of our people in favor of political union with the United States. There are evidently more who favor such union than there had been before the complete and manifest collapse of the N. P. as a remedy for financial troubles. The number is no doubt few in the aggregate as compared with the whole population of the Dominion; but, since the first attack outside of Essex was made in my own constituency, I have thought it my duty to take this early opportunity of stating at length some of the reasons for remaining faithful to what has long been the recognised policy of Canadian Liberals. I wish also to correct an inference which has been drawn from a published letter of mine to Dr. McKay, my colleague in the representation of Oxford in the Legislative Assembly, written at his request the day before the Woodstock meeting, that I am now against unrestricted reciprocity with the United States in the products of the two countries. This is not so. Loyalist as I am, I am willing to run the risk of a fair measure of unrestricted reciprocity. Some risks have to be run in all great measures, and these risks are sometimes in one direction and sometimes in another.

#### ATTACHMENT TO BRITISH CONNECTION.

The attachment of Canadians to British connection has stood many tests during a hundred years and more, and, I hope and think, will bear this test also. It was the attachment of the people of Canada to British connection that prevented them from joining the other colonies in the war of the Revolution. The same attachment brought from those colonies to Canada, when the war closed, the U. E. Loyalists, men who sacrificed all, or nearly all, their acquired means, and submitted to the unaccustomed hardships and privation of a pioneer life in the woods of Canada, in order that they and their families and descendants might re-

main British subjects. Their example deserves the respect of their descendants and fellow-Canadians throughout all time.

This attachment to British connection on the part of Canadians of all origins showed itself again in the war of 1812; and continued until the outbreak in the two Canadas in 1837. At the time of that outbreak the people were laboring under such grievances that an English statesman of rank, after investigating the matter, declared, in effect, that the demands of the Reformers had been reasonable, and that their political opponents were to blame for the rebellion. The outbreak in both Provinces was limited. In Ontario it was put down without the aid of the military. Most Reformers refused to countenance it, preferring to rely on peaceful agitation for the redress of their grievances, and many of them in consequence joined the rest of the community in crushing the movement. The two Canadas were soon afterwards united, and responsible government was conceded to the Province of Canada, as it was afterwards in succession to all the other colonies of the empire. From that time the Liberals of Canada have again been amongst its most loyal inhabitants. There have always been in both parties a few excellent men not sharing this British sentiment, and such have, as I believe, been quite as numerous among Conservatives as among Liberals; the aggregate number has been small.

In 1849, Mr. Abbott and others, carried away by one of those temporary depressions experienced in every country, united in an annexation manifesto at Montreal; but the movement was short-lived, and the principal parties to the manifesto were among the first to abandon the desire for annexation, and to resume their attachment to British connection.

The cry for annexation in 1837, and again in 1849, was partial and short-lived; the cry in 1891, so far, is still more partial, and I hope will prove equally short-lived.

The two principal Liberal leaders in Canada in the last half century were successively Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Brown, and these gentlemen were all their lives as heartily attached to British connection as they were to Canada and its interests. Mr. Brown was

at the same time an admirer of the people of the United States ; was outspoken on the side of the North in the war between the North and the South ; and was for reciprocity of trade in, not natural products alone, but in many manufactures also.

#### INTERPROVINCIAL CONFERENCE IN 1887.

A resolution on the subject of British connection and unrestricted reciprocity was unanimously passed by the delegates at the Interprovincial Conference at Quebec in 1887. The delegates were from the Provincial Governments of Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Manitoba, and were not all Liberals, though most of them were. This was the resolution :— " That, having reference to the agitation on the subject of the trade relations between the Dominion and the United States, this Interprovincial Conference, consisting of representatives of all political parties, desires to record its opinion that unrestricted reciprocity would be of advantage to all the Provinces of the Dominion ; that this conference and the people it represents cherish fervent loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen and warm attachment to British connection ; that this conference is of opinion that a fair measure, providing, under proper conditions, for unrestricted reciprocal trade relations between the Dominion and the United States, would not lessen these sentiments on the part of our people, and, on the contrary, may even serve to increase them, and would at the same time, in connection with an adjustment of the fishery dispute, tend to happily settle grave difficulties which have from time to time arisen between the mother country and the United States."

#### ADDRESS OF THE COMMONS IN 1890.

In the Canadian Parliamentary session of 1890 an address was moved (29th January) by a leading Liberal from Ontario, Mr. Mulock, seconded by a leading Liberal from Quebec, Col. Amyot, and unanimously adopted, conveying to Her Majesty the following emphatic assurances of the attachment of the whole people of Canada to their British connection :—

" We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Com-

mons of Canada, in Parliament assembled, desire most earnestly, in our own name and on behalf of the people whom we represent, to renew the expression of our unswerving loyalty and devotion to your Majesty's person and Government.

"We have learned with feelings of entire disapproval that various public statements have been made calling in question the loyalty of the people of Canada to the political union now happily existing between this Dominion and the British empire, and representing it as the desire of the people of Canada to sever such connection.

"We desire, therefore, to assure your Majesty that such statements are wholly incorrect representations of the sentiments and aspirations of the people of Canada, who are among your Majesty's most loyal subjects, devotedly attached to the political union existing between Canada and the mother country and earnestly desire its continuance.

"We feel assured that your Majesty will not allow any such statements, emanating from any source whatever, to lessen your Majesty's confidence in the loyalty of your Canadian subjects to your Majesty's person and Government, and will accept our assurances of the contentment of your Majesty's Canadian subjects with the political connection between Canada and the rest of the British empire, and of their fixed resolve to aid in maintaining the same."

I notice that every member present in the House at the time voted for this address—161 in all; and among them were your self, one of the most honored in the roll of Canadian Liberals; our friend Mr. Laurier, the present greatly esteemed and respected leader of the Liberal party in the Dominion; Sir Richard Cartwright, his able coadjutor from our own Province; and all the other prominent Liberals from all the Provinces. I observe that the other Liberal members from Ontario who voted for the address were:—Hon. David Mills, Messrs. Trow, Sutherland, Burdett, Charlton, Cook, Paterson, Barron, Innes, Landerkin, McMullen, McDonald of Huron, McMillan of Huron, Somerville, Armstrong, Bain, Bowman, Campbell, Casey, Laing, Livingstone, Purcell, Rowand, Scriver, Semple and Waldie.



## MR. LAURIER'S POSITION.

Again, in the address to the electors of Canada by Mr. Laurier in the last election campaign, he pointed out that "in the present contest nothing is involved which in one way or another can affect the existing status of Canada." He placed unrestricted reciprocity in the front as the object of the Liberal party; and referring to the "assertion that unrestricted reciprocity means discrimination against England, involves the proposition that the Canadian tariff would have to be assimilated to the American tariff," he said:—"I deny the proposition. Reciprocity can be obtained upon an assimilation of tariffs, or upon the retention of its own tariff by each country," etc.

Much has been said in Conservative journals of the disloyalty of Mr. Laurier's recent speech at Boston. In that speech I find the following observations:—"I make no secret that the people of Canada of all origins and of all classes entertain toward England, which for the last fifty years has treated us with justice, nay, with generosity, sentiments of deep affection." As to unrestricted reciprocity he observed:—"In behalf of the Liberal party of Canada I hasten to say that the one thing of all things which we at this moment hold to be of the utmost importance is, that the relations between the United States and Canada should be made as friendly and as close as become the dignity and interest of two nations of the same kith and kin on this continent of America." . . . "In fact, the first article at this moment in the programme of the Liberal party is, if possible, to establish absolute reciprocal freedom of trade between Canada and the United States for all products of the two countries, whether natural or manufactured." . . . "It is also objected that the American people would not consent to such an arrangement without practically forcing us to abandon the control of our tariff and taking it in their own hands. . . . I have only to say, however, that if unrestricted reciprocity were to be had only by the sacrifice, however slight, of Canada's dignity, I would have none of it. But whatever may be the opinion or the dread of others, I have no such anxiety. I have no fear that the American authorities would be disposed to be over-bearing because they represent over

60,000,000, whereas we represent less than 5,000,000, especially when approached with candor by men sensitive to the honor of their country, but am confident that such a feeling would evoke nothing but respect from honorable men. I am fully aware that the plan of reciprocity which we would propose, each country keeping the control of its own tariff, might be at the first view liable to difficulties of a more serious nature, but difficulties, I submit, with full confidence, which might be met and successfully overcome by negotiations embodied in the treaty."

Mr. Laurier further truly said:—"It were childish for anyone to be deterred from a course the immediate consequences of which would be manifestly beneficial, because of the possibility of remote consequences which might not be in accordance with our conception of what things ought to be. By such considerations all progress in the world would be put an end to, for who could undertake to regulate in advance, or even to foresee, the infinite results of a step forward in the life of a nation?" Again he observed:—"In the very nature of things, from the sole fact that Canada is growing, developing and progressing, the interests of Canada and the interests of England must be divergent, and, whenever the interests of Canada are on one side and the interests of England are on the other side, the only consideration for me is what is best for Canada, leaving it to the people of England to consider and do what is best for England. This is not a question of sentiment, and, for my part, I am firmly convinced that the economic interests of Canada lie with this continent, and it is on the broad basis of continental freedom of trade that I place the question."

Many loyal British Canadians would endorse the same views. As for the Conservatives, when they were taunted with taxing British products as a policy opposed to British connection, the well-known reply of their organ was, "So much the worse for British connection."

The question of future Independence is not an issue between Conservatives and Reformers. So prominent a member of the Conservative government as the Hon. Mr. Chapleau, when speaking at Providence, R.I., the other day made the following obser-

ations on the same subject, and on Mr. Laurier's reference to it at Boston :—

The discussion of this important topic, the commercial intercourse between Canada and the United States, has given rise to some other questions involving directly the national existence of our country. First, the question of national independence. There are those who say, and they are not far from telling the truth, that every native-born Canadian is Canadian first and last, and that every day the proportion of native-born Canadians increases as against the native Britons forming the Dominion. It is true, and I admit it, that every Canadian wants at maturity a country of his own to live for to fight for and if necessary to die for. Nobody is so deaf to the teachings of history as not to realise the natural fact that colonies, like shoots from the parent tree, gradually but surely tend towards independent life. The only question is a question of time. The age of majority for children has been fixed by the wise legislation of great men at different ages for different countries or different purposes, and it greatly depends upon the circumstances in which a young man is situated in relation to his father, either for the line of business he pursues, the amount of interest he has or the measure of liberty he enjoys under the protection of his father, before he finds it useful and wise to go into business on his own account. This is the very position of Canadians. . . . I believe in that mysterious and natural growth of nations towards independence, which alone can give them the full development of their strength and resources. . . . Sir, I am a British-born subject, and a Frenchman by parentage. I am proud of and loyal to the great country to which I politically belong. I am proud of and true to the blood that runs through my veins, that Norman blood which is the boast of the noblest scions of England. The two nations are deserving your love and respect, as they have mine. You owe to one your birth, as I owe her my freedom as a citizen ; the other helped you in your struggle for independence, whilst she gave me my birth as a man. Both have noble traditions. In the banners of both there is glory enough to cover the world. (Loud cheers.) With such a parentage, with such traditions of courage, of intelligence, of glory, are the Canadians to be denied the noble ambition, the sure destiny of being a people by themselves an Independent Nation? I do not doubt it more than I doubt my sincere allegiance to the constitution of my country and to my sovereign. But I do not doubt, either, that no power on earth will force me into submission against my will or against my conscience. Against my will I would be made a slave, never a subject. And the hour has passed in the life of nations, and that hour never came in this free continent of America, when free men could be forced into another people's allegiance. I know that it has been said and written, both in this country and in ours, that the effect of the McKinley tariff will so cramp the trade and finances of the people of Canada that we will be compelled to seek an-

nexion to the United States. Well, sir, I know the feelings of our people, with whom I have lived in constant communion of sentiments during the 30 years of my political life, and I do not hesitate a moment to say that no consideration of finance or trade can have influence on the loyalty of the descendants of the races of whom I spoke to you in the opening of my address, or tend in the slightest degree to alienate their affections from their country, their institutions, their Government and their Queen. If anyone in this meeting believes that in refusing commercial intercourse to Canada they would undermine the loyal feelings of our people, he is laboring under a delusion and doing an injustice to a people whose sentiment of loyalty is as indelible as your own, and I cannot do better than by affirming with more energy, if it be possible, with Mr. Laurier, what he affirmed the other day in Boston:—"If such a boon as freedom of trade were to be purchased by the slightest sacrifice of my nation's dignity, I would have none of it."

#### OTHER LIBERALS ON ANNEXATION.

In Oxford, Mr. Sutherland, who represents North Oxford in the Commons, asserted at the Woodstock meeting that Mr. White was entirely mistaken when he declared in his speech that "those who voted for reciprocity at the last election voted for annexation." On behalf of the Liberals of Oxford he repudiated any such idea. It might be repudiated in like manner for every constituency in the Province, or indeed in the Dominion, on behalf of its Liberal voters.

I conclude this part of my letter by copying a few sentences from a lecture before the Toronto National Club by another prominent Liberal, who has done good service in the Liberal cause in Ontario as a member of the House of Commons, a member of the Provincial Government and Legislature, as well as in other ways, and who is as well acquainted with public sentiment as any man I know, the Hon. James Young:—

Both our great political parties are happily opposed to political union, and I hope—nay, I feel confident—there are very few Canadians, especially those who are native born, who seriously entertain that idea. With all its blemishes, the record of the British Monarchy is a grand one. Against Philip of Spain and his armada, against Louis XIV. at Blenheim and Ramilies, and at the great battle of Waterloo—when the power of Napoleon was finally shattered to atoms—it can justly claim to have almost single-handed thrice saved the liberties of the world. The world owes more to it to-day than to any other power—civil liberty, representative government, religious

toleration, its purest literature and its freest commerce. Whilst, therefore, we may cherish the most kindly feelings towards our United States cousins, whilst we may admire the great republic and wish it God-speed in its grand career, I have mistaken my fellow-countrymen if they are not too proud of the races from which we have sprung, too hopeful of a great future for Canadian nationality to ever seriously think of separation from Great Britain to join any other nation. . . . There is some danger, I admit, in the agitation of Mr. Goldwin Smith and other advocates of absorption, but I do not fear our fellow-countrymen's decision. I believe the vast majority of them are unalterably opposed to political union, and are fully persuaded that it would be a stain for ever on the Canadian name if, with a country so vast, with such immense natural resources, possessing at once the agricultural element, the manufacturing element, and the maritime element—indeed all the elements of a great nation—we were too craven or too selfish to work out the grand national destiny tempting us onwards.

#### THE LIBERAL PRESS.

Then as regards the Liberal press, the leading Liberal journal in Ontario has long been the *Toronto Globe*; the leading organ of the English-speaking Liberals in Quebec is, I presume, the *Montreal Herald*. *The Globe*, so long distinguished for its vigorous advocacy of British connection, free trade, and the rights of our Province, has been said, and has by some been supposed, to have become the opponent of British connection. That, if it were true, would be a great public calamity and disappointment. If articles or sentences may be quoted from its recent columns seeming to favor that view, it is enough at present to point out that in announcing the other day an enlargement of the paper and its future policy, it is stated distinctly that *The Globe* "adheres to its historical course and policy, is thoroughly Canadian in tone and sentiment, loyal to British connection, aggressively hostile to tariff exaction and trade restriction," etc.

The *Montreal Herald* is equally explicit. Commenting on Mr. Chapleau's recent speech at Providence, R. I., and on unfounded suggestions in it that the Liberals of Canada "proposed to surrender Canada's commercial and political independence by adopting the tariff of the United States along the seaboard and allowing our tariff to be dictated from Washington," the *Herald* answered:—"The Liberals repudiate any such interpretation of their trade policy. The Liberal trade policy, so far as the United

States are concerned, is the freest possible trade relations with that country consistent with our commercial and political independence. On this point Mr. Chapleau had before him not only Mr. Laurier's explicit declarations in Parliament and his speech at Boston, but he had also before him the utterances of the Liberal press of Canada, and he therefore had no excuse for indulging in such misrepresentation."

Such is still the policy, as I understand it, of the whole Liberal party; of the old leaders and the new; of the members of Parliament and of the Provincial Legislatures; and of the Liberal press.

#### THE CASE AGAINST POLITICAL UNION.

Why are Canadians opposed to giving up Canada to the United States? Why do we wish to retain our British connection? Why are Liberals so generally opposed to taking that old plank out of the Liberal platform?

It is certainly not because of any hatred towards the United States. Such hatred exists amongst very few of the Canadian people, and but for the animosity prevailing in the United States against Great Britain, the number would be still fewer; perhaps there would be none. You and I know and esteem too many of the citizens of the United States to hate their country, which they love as we love ours. We know, and admire, and rejoice in, the many valuable qualities which they possess, and have inherited from our common ancestors, and for which the new world has given such splendid scope. We rejoice in the kindly feeling toward the great American republic which nowadays so generally pervades the population of the old lands, and of all lands politically connected with them. We regret that a like feeling towards our nation grows very slowly amongst the masses of the people of the United States. It is making some progress, and we heartily recognise and appreciate the progress which it has made amongst, especially, the cultured, the travelled, the religious and the non-political classes. I think that hatred of Britain does not exist at all among citizens of the United States who have settled in Canada.

Canadians in general have no hatred towards the United

States, but they are against surrendering to them this great country in which our lot is cast and which has been committed to our keeping. We are against giving to the 63,000,000 of people to the south of us absolute power forever over all our federal and national interests. Conservatives and Liberals alike are against this, and for many reasons.

#### A PARTY REASON.

In addition to the reasons which are common to both Conservatives and Liberals, there is a party reason why Liberals as a party should retain British connection in their platform. In a paper by a Liberal for Liberals, this party reason should be mentioned for the sake of any Liberals, though they may be few, who, though attached to their party, and in the public interest desiring its success, have been induced to think favorably of political union with the United States. I desire to call to the notice of such that for the Liberal party or any important section of it to favor political union with the United States would be death to all hope of Liberal ascendancy in the councils of the Dominion. Though the Liberal party as a whole is sound on this question, the Conservative leaders perceived that to charge us with disloyalty was their best policy in order to keep themselves in power; and every indication of an anti-British sentiment on the part of any of our party is thus playing into the hands of our political opponents. At the last general Dominion election we lost some Liberal votes in Ontario from a fear, created by Conservative management, that Liberal leaders were looking to political union; and many more Liberal votes would have been lost but for the confidence of Liberals generally that the charge was false. As a mere matter of party tactics, therefore, and in addition to all other considerations, it is our policy to see that our party shows itself on all occasions to be as true to British connection, and as little disposed to surrender this great Dominion to our neighbors, as the most British of Conservatives are.

But there are many reasons against political union which are national and common to Canadians of all parties. Let me glance at a few of the reasons which specially influence my own mind.



## BRITAIN IS OUR OWN NATION.

(1) Britain, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, is our own nation, as it was the nation of our fathers. It is a nation to which we may be proud of belonging. Among the nations of Europe, ours has been for centuries in the front as regards freedom, civilisation, learning and power, and as regards all the arts of both peace and war. It is at this day the most extensive empire in the world, and possesses in unsurpassed measure all the elements which go to make up national greatness. We are glad that we are citizens of this empire. We rejoice that we were born under its flag, as our fathers were. We are proud of our present status as British subjects. We have as Canadians no grievance against the Imperial Government or Parliament, as the other American colonies had in the last century. Canada has had representative Government for a century, and responsible Government for the last half century. We have now for the Dominion of Canada and its Provinces the very constitution which through our representatives we ourselves asked for 25 years ago; and no amendment desired by our representatives since has been refused. Attachment to our own nation thus constitutes one great reason why Canadians in general are against now changing their nationality for any other.

(2) Another reason somewhat akin to the first is, that we cannot and do not forget that Canada was won in the last century by British blood and the expenditure of British treasure. The men and the money were the contributions of Englishmen, Irishmen and Scotchmen of the old lands. Canada thereupon belonged, with all its undeveloped wealth, to the whole British people. It did not become as a matter of right the property of the first settlers, any more than Muskoka or Parry Sound or Algoma became the property of the early settlers of these districts, as against the rest of Ontario. The management of the ungranted lands in the old Provinces, the timber, the minerals, the waters, the fisheries, and all the money these could be made to yield, were afterwards transferred by imperial authority to the Provincial Legislatures and Governments. The immense territory outside the old Provinces, and comprising some millions of square-

miles, was more recently transferred in like manner to the Dominion of Canada, at the request of our representatives. The transfer in all cases was a gift, and not by way of purchase and sale. It seems to most Canadians, as it seems to you and me, that for us to now transfer, or seek to transfer, this great Dominion to another nation, for some expected advantage to us of a material kind, that other nation not being even a friendly one, would be in accordance with neither patriotism nor sound morals. This view has only to be further considered to have great weight with hesitating Canadians.

#### ASPIRATIONS FOR INDEPENDENCE.

(3) Again, the aspiration of Canadians is for an independent Canada, in case of this country ceasing to be part of the British empire. Our territory is as large as the United States, or perhaps somewhat larger. It has immense resources for purposes of agriculture and commerce. Two-thirds of the wheat area of North America is in Canada; and United States statisticians are calculating that the time is not far distant when their country will cease to export wheat, and will need to import for home consumption. We have probably the finest forests and richest fisheries in the world. We have coal and iron, and copper and silver, and gold and nickel. Our climate is specially adapted for developing an active and hardy population. Canada has thus ample materials for becoming a nation; and there is ample room on the North American continent for two great nations. It would be in important respects for the advantage of their populations that there should be two such nations rather than one. Our wish, therefore, is that, in case of the Dominion of Canada ceasing to be part of the British empire, it should become an independent nation, governed by its own people, but in perpetual amity and alliance with the Fatherlands, and with our brothers of the United States. As the United States have become a great nation south of the great lakes, so Canadians like to contemplate this Canada of ours as also becoming a great nation north of these lakes. Political union would put an end forever to the hope of this. Those who favour political union are not going for "Canada

first," but are going for the very reverse. In case of annexation Canada would be no more. It would, as a political organisation, be effaced from the map of the world. Annexation would be an absolute transfer of this great country, and all its resources and Federal interests, from its own people to the people of the United States. The representatives at Washington of our 5,000,000 of people would be outweighed twelve times over by the representatives of the 63,000,000 who occupy the present States of the Union. Canadians can have no pleasure in such a prospect.

The time has not yet come for forming Canada into an independent nation. Any who think so are deceiving themselves. The Provinces of the Dominion are not prepared for union as a nation. They are not yet sufficiently knit together in national sentiment as Canadians. Our common British connection is the strongest tie that at present binds us together. Then considering, in connection with this fact, that we have a frontier of several thousand miles, alongside a nation of 63,000,000, absolute independence is plainly out of the question for the present. Apart from all other considerations, therefore, British connection is to be cherished meanwhile by all practicable and just means, in the interest of Canadian independence. To promote disaffection towards our own nation is against all our aspirations for Canada's national future. To obtain and keep independence we shall need all our people's patience and patriotism, and all our statesmen's wisdom; and one essential requirement is the cherishing meanwhile of our British connection and the British sentiment of our people. When the opportune time comes for Canadian independence we shall need British alliance. Securing British alliance, we may also have the alliance of other European countries which are represented in our population, and the alliance of the United States also, with which we have so many things in common. But without British friendship and British alliance our separate nationality will be hopeless.

#### THE ANIMOSITY IN THE UNITED STATES AGAINST BRITAIN.

(4) The unfriendly feeling towards our nation on the part of the people of the United States presents one of the most powerful

objections on the part of the Canadians to political union with them. It is with the deepest regret that I have noticed from time to time so many proofs of this unfriendly feeling. The proofs are to be found in the school books which are in use; in the 4th of July orations; in the tone of the newspapers and their European despatches; in the diplomatic documents; in the election cries; in the speeches of public men in the Federal and State Legislatures and elsewhere; and in many other ways. Happily, all do not share this animosity, but it evidently predominates amongst the great mass of the population. No such animosity is manifested against Russia, or Austria, or Spain, or Turkey, or any other country, as is manifested against our nation, though there is so much to create at the present day a different feeling. On this point there is no room for a reasonable doubt. Mr. Goldwin Smith has repeatedly spoken of it. He would, no doubt, be glad to believe the contrary, for he is the most powerful of all the advocates for political union with the United States. He has had ample means of knowing the truth as regards the national sentiment, and his honesty in stating facts no one doubts, however we may dissent from some of the views or measures which he advocates. In his recent address on "Jingoism" before the Young Men's Liberal Club in Toronto, he made these observations:—"No Englishman—and he who addresses you is an Englishman to the core—can speak with hearty goodwill or admiration of the Americans so long as they persist in their hatred of the old country. It is a narrow and mean tradition, unworthy of a great people."

The professor had an article on the same subject in the *North American Review* last year, which he entitled "Hatred of England." In this paper he showed with great clearness and force how little ground there is for the "Anglophobia" which he stated to exist. The following are sentences from the article:—"An American journal said the other day that the American people could not help rejoicing in any reverse that might befall England. It may well be so considering what the journals, which are the only teachers of the masses, every morning and evening tell them, and, when you are in a mood to rejoice in a man's mis-

fortunes, you are not very far from being ready to do that which, if he has any pugnacity, will lead to trouble. A war between England and France, which is the subject of constant speculation, would furnish plenty of opportunities for embroilment." This Anglophobia, he observed a little later on, "long prevented the British domiciled here (in the United States) from being naturalised, and still estranges their hearts from their adopted country. It stands seriously in the way of any attempt to effect a re-union of the English-speaking race upon this continent. British Canadians love a mother country which has never wilfully given them cause for complaint, and they take hostility to her as hostility to them. . . . A generation at least will probably pass . . . before Americans, who read no annals but their own, will cease, historically at least, to identify patriotism with hostility to Great Britain." He speaks also of the Anglophobia in American literature, observing (amongst other things): "I could mention American authors whose writings would be charming to me if the taste of Anglophobia were not always coming, like the taste of garlic in Italian cookery, to offend the palate of the English reader. . . . There is no pervading antipathy to America in British literature; no Americanophobia, if one may coin so uncouth a word. Nor in the English press is there anything corresponding to the anti-British tone (I use a very mild expression) of American journalism."

Canadians are against political union with a nation of whom these things may be said, and as long as they may be truly said.

A little incident which occurred to myself in Albany in 1889 is as striking an illustration of this hatred as one could have. I happened to be in Albany for a day when the State Legislature was in session. A member of the Senate moved that I should be permitted to take a seat on the floor of the House, the rules requiring such a motion. He mentioned the official position I occupied in Ontario as the reason for this courtesy. A member immediately objected on the ground of my being a British official, and threatened the mover with the wrath of their common constituents if the motion should be pressed. Another member spoke

against the motion, and is reported to have said that "if even Queen Victoria herself leaning on the arm of the Governor-General of Canada should stand at the rail and beg for admittance to the floor," it should be refused. The objection having been taken on the ground it was, not one of the whole body of Senators, except the mover, felt free to say one word in support of the motion; and it was thereupon withdrawn. Thus, even in the State of New York, with which Canadians have so much intercourse, animosity against our Nation is a power amongst its voters which may interfere with an act of common courtesy towards even a Colonial official.

I have quoted what the professor says as to the chances of war between the United States and Great Britain as the natural consequence of the national animosity of the former. Canadians regard with horror such a change in their political relations that they, their sons and their other fellow Canadians, may, in case of such a war, be called on either to fight or to pay others for fighting against what is now their own nation. There is more or less of Jingoism in all nations, and it is not at all improbable that the Jingoism of our neighbors would be considerably stimulated if the whole of the continent should become theirs.

But for this animosity in the United States the question of political union with that country would present itself to British Canadians under very different conditions from those actually existing. One of the strongest objections to political union would be removed if the time should come when that unreasonable animosity had passed away from the national mind. The political union, on a satisfactory basis, of two communities of the same origin, both alike friendly to the mother-land of both, might be no shock either to our fellow subjects across the Atlantic, or to the loyalists of Canada, if other considerations could be got over. Such a political union might then be acquiesced in by many present opponents of union, and might be even hailed by them as the precursor of the political union for common objects of all English-speaking countries, including those whose populations may not be wholly English-speaking. This, again, all humanitarians would like to think, might be followed by the union of all civilized nations for objects common to them all,

including the abandonment of the enormous armies which have now to be kept on foot for their defence against one another.

CANADIANS WILL NOT BE COERCED.

(5) In discussing the desirability of unrestricted reciprocity, if attainable on fair terms, in lieu of the barriers now existing on both sides, much is necessarily said of the McKinley tariff and its effect as regards our farmers. On the other hand, if that tariff and its injurious operation are dwelt on too exclusively, some of our people may be brought to assume that in shaping the future of their country, an intelligent people should think of immediate material interests only, and that political union with the United States should be sought for as the readiest way of securing the material advantages which we desire. That, I rejoice to know, is not now the sentiment of the masses of the people in Canada. As British subjects they do not choose to be coerced into political union by the McKinley tariff or other unfriendly measures. The agricultural schedule to the McKinley Act affects Canada only, and was distinctly intended, no doubt, to affect Canada. But it would be a new thing for men of British blood, or French blood, or German blood, to submit willingly to be bullied or harassed or otherwise coerced into a union which is for any reason distasteful or objectionable, or for which for any reason they are not prepared. If Canadians are ever to unite willingly with the United States, the union will be the result of other means; of national friendship; of mutual good will; of common sentiments; and of free choice. In common with most other Liberals, I have been willing to run any risk of political union being brought about by unrestricted reciprocity, and by the freer friendly intercourse of every kind which reciprocity may create. But, in common with my fellow Canadians of all parties, I am not for considering political union as a means of escape from the inconveniences of hostile pressure on the part of the nation with which we are to unite.

CANADIAN CONSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM SUPERIOR TO THAT OF THE UNITED STATES.

(6 ) I am all the more against political union with the United



States, because our constitutional system is in material respects better than theirs. The chief if not the only weakness of our system as compared with theirs is in the constitution of our Senate; but this would be changed whenever our people should express the wish. The jurisdiction of our Federal Legislature is better, in that it includes important particulars which the constitution of the United States does not assign to the central authorities. Amongst these is the militia, a department which certainly belongs to the nation as much as the regular military forces do. Other subjects of this class are: criminal law, and the laws as to such commercial subjects as bills of exchange, promissory notes, interest and legal tender, all which laws ought certainly to be uniform in every Province or State of the country. Further, our system is better because it provides for a Dominion Court of Appeal from the Provincial Courts on all subjects, and thus secures uniformity of decision throughout the Dominion, instead of the endless diversity which prevails amongst the several States.

#### THE CIVIL SERVICE.

So, a permanent civil service is a desideratum in the Federal and local systems of the United States; and reformers there have for years been making vigorous efforts to obtain such a system, regarding it as a reform of the first magnitude; but they have not been successful. We have such a system now, and have had it always, under both the Dominion and the Provincial Governments. With us, Conservative Governments, with all their faults, do not as a rule remove officers and employés because they are Reformers; and Reform Governments do not remove officers and employés because they are Conservatives; a change of Government does not affect in that way any branch of the civil service in Canada.

#### INDEPENDENCE OF THE JUDGES.

Take again the still more important matter of the independence of the judges, and for this purpose, the mode of their appointment, their tenure of office, etc. We have in this matter retained the British system; and there is no subject on which Canadians have hitherto been more of one mind than, in the general interest,

preferring this system to any other. But, one after another, the States have adopted the plan of elective judges, and fixed terms at the end of which they have to go back for re-election. Such a system has a democratic look, adds to the importance of the ward politicians, and is evidently going to stay. In case of political union with the United States, what with the example of these States, the gradual changes of population which union may be expected to effect in Canada, and the same influences as brought about the election of judges in the States, the early adoption of a like system here may be regarded as inevitable.

#### RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

Our system is better than that of the United States in a still more important matter, viz., because our system provides for responsible government in both the Federal authority and in the Provinces, instead of the election of executive officers for fixed terms and the exclusion from the Legislatures of the heads of departments. This is a fundamental difference between the United States system and ours. The British system of responsible government, as now understood, is the system adopted under all representative constitutions of European countries, as well as in the Dominion and its Provinces, and in British colonies generally. Mr. Baldwin and his Reform coadjutors perceived the great superiority of this system over the system of the United States, and contended for it successfully after the union of Lower and Upper Canada. It was the system adopted by the Confederate States in their movement for separation from the Northern States. It is the system approved of in theory by distinguished men in the United States in and out of political life; but there is no prospect of its adoption there. Prof. Bryce points out in his work on the American Commonwealth (p. 279), "why the fathers of the constitution did not adopt the English Parliamentary or Cabinet system. They could not adopt it because they did not know of its existence. They did not know of it because it was still immature, because Englishmen themselves had not understood it, because the recognized authorities did not mention it."

A few years ago a select committee of the United States Senate was appointed to consider a bill to provide that the principal

officer of each of the executive departments should have a seat in the Senate and House of Representatives. This was a proposal to adopt one of the advantages of the British and Canadian system of responsible government. The committee unanimously reported in favor of the bill, and set forth in their report some of the advantages of the measure, its consistency with the constitution of the United States, and the almost universal prevalence of a corresponding practice in all countries which make even a pretence to representative government. But the measure has never since received the slightest attention from either House of Congress or from the executive.

In a recent article in the "Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science," the reasons of this inattention are explained to be, the conservatism which objects to a revolution in traditional forms of business, and the powerful private interests which would be injured by the change. The writer, referring to the experience of Great Britain, says:—"It is beyond question that precisely this public and personal responsibility has converted both Parliament and Ministry from the corrupt condition of Walpole's time and half a century later, gradually but steadily to the purified condition of the present day, has extinguished bribery at elections, and to that end has led the House of Commons to surrender its control in the case of disputed elections into the hands of the courts. It is this personal responsibility which has been the instrument of carrying into effect more extensive and at the same time peaceful reforms in the interest of the masses of the people at large, than have been achieved in the same time by any other nation in the world."

Speaking of the United States system, which is by irresponsible committees of either House, instead of a responsible government in the British sense, the same writer makes these observations: "This is an arrangement so fruitful of corruption and jobbery that it would drag down and corrupt the purest and ablest body of men in the world. For the working of the committee system I need only refer to Prof. Woodrow Wilson's work on 'Congressional Government.' The result is, that no question is ever considered, debated or acted upon from the point of view of the general interest of the people. It is simply a matter of securing the

largest number of local and party votes by private manipulation, intrigue, lobbying and the manufacture of a spurious and fictitious public opinion. The McKinley Tariff Bill, the Silver Coinage Bill, the Pension Bill are the results of just this process, and, whether good or bad, are in no way the concentrated expression of a national public opinion. . . . . The whole mass is sent upon a precisely equal footing to the standing committees, and what attention, if any, they receive must depend upon the amount of private and party influence which is brought to bear upon the committees. . . . . It is obvious that the existing state of things gives an enormous advantage to private and party interest in the hands of skilled manipulators under the stimulus of direct gain, as against the interest of the people at large who have no agent or representative."

While a member of the Opposition in the Canadian Parliament, I had an opportunity of seeing from an Opposition standpoint the working of the responsible system, and I have since had experience of its working in my present position. In view of my observation and experience, I have not a doubt of the great value of this system as compared with every other. Liberals have had just cause to condemn various acts of the Conservative Ministries to whom the people of Canada have given their confidence, but neither you nor I doubt that but for responsible government matters would have been very much worse.

If our Province should become a State of the Union we could not hope that its people would not, as a natural consequence, very soon, if not at the very beginning, follow the system in use at Washington and in every State of the Union.

Again: in regard to the operations of our system, our Province is in advance of most of the States, if not all, in matters of agriculture, of education, and of temperance; in municipal law; laws for the regulation and security of our land titles; laws for securing to mechanics and laborers the fruit of their labor; laws for the administration of justice; laws affecting public morals; laws affecting elections; and many other matters.

We are shocked just now at the political corruption which has recently come more or less to light; and well we may be. But

we would be ignorant indeed if we should suppose that in that respect our neighbors have been more fortunate than we have been; and it would be absurd to say, and folly to suppose, that what has happened with us was the result of our British connection. So, we complain of gerrymandering; but gerrymandering of the same kind was first conceived and acted on by our neighbors, and appears to have become the resort of all their parties when they have power and opportunity.

(7) Once more: As a Liberal I have a special dislike of any movement towards severing our British connection at a time when the people of the fatherland have come into a larger control of its Parliament and Government than they had at any former period of its history; when even a Conservative Government has become liberal enough to satisfy John Bright and other life-long Radicals; and when one of England's great parties has adopted as one of its principal objects Home Rule for Ireland. Canada was loyal to British connection when all power was in the hands of the aristocracy and some privileged classes. Are there any Liberals who, without having any grievance against the Imperial Parliament or Government, will be less loyal now that the body of the people are the controlling power? Are they willing that the advent of popular power in the old lands should be nearly contemporary with the disintegration of the empire and with the transfer of its most important dominion to a foreign power? Let doubting Liberals consider this.

#### SENTIMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS.

Some and only some of these considerations are matters of sentiment; and much has been said recently in the way of decrying sentiment as childish, unworthy of thought, and claiming that material interest is the only consideration by which men should be influenced. As for the material interests involved, I have faith and hope that these may be proved by experience to be on the whole and in the long run in favour of British connection, and of an independent nationality by-and-bye, rather than in favour of our giving ourselves to be swallowed up by the United States. But this decrying of sentiment is absurd. From sentiment men

sacrifice their property and even their lives; and every example of such sacrifice goes home to the hearts of all who see it or hear of it. It is sentiment which in a thousand ways rules the world. Sentiment rules the United States, though the mighty dollar is such a power there. It was sentiment, and not any commercial advantage, which caused our neighbours to put an end to the old reciprocity treaty, as Mr. Blaine has frankly admitted. It was sentiment, in a large measure, and not any object of material benefit, which led to and sustained the great civil war between the North and the South. So powerful is sentiment that no State in the Union would consent to transfer its allegiance to a foreign power, however strong material interests should be in that direction. Nothing more shocks men than the idea of selling their country for gold, however great the quantity of gold may be. A people without sentiment would be contemned by all other civilised or even half-civilised peoples. Among all peoples no love is more powerful than love of country; and for this purpose country does not mean the village, or town, or city, or the township, or county, or province, in which we live. Love of country is of the whole country or nation of which the village or province is but a portion. Our attachment to the great Empire whose subjects and citizens we are may be a matter of sentiment, but it is a legitimate sentiment, and a fitting sentiment if any can be so.

On a question of our political relations, to ignore or belittle all considerations except those of some material interest is not to take a broad view of the question, but is to take an extremely narrow view of it. All Liberal tradition is against a narrow view of public questions. Principle, and not mere hope of personal profit, has always been the Liberal doctrine.

#### OCCASION OF THIS LETTER.

I am writing the present letter for publication. My special object in writing is to urge on Liberals to stand by all the accepted principles of the Liberal party in Canada, including the two articles of British connection and unrestricted reciprocity. I address my letter to you with your permission and because your views and mine concur. Both of us are with our party for unrestricted reciprocity, because we believe that unrestricted reciprocity

would be a good thing for both Canada and the United States; and we know that reciprocity is only obtainable, if at all, through the Liberal party; the only reciprocity the Conservatives go for being a reciprocity short of what would, as we believe, be for the interest of Canada, and short at the same time of what the United States would agree to.

My letter to Dr. McKay is spoken of in the Conservative press as if it expressed new opinions on my part; and it is suggested that the letter was written for publication, and to announce to the general public of Canada an antagonism between myself and the Liberal leaders, the Hon. Mr. Laurier and Sir Richard Cartwright, his able coadjutor in Ontario. The truth is otherwise on both points. My letter was written for no other object than the Woodstock meeting, and without any thought of antagonism towards either of our two friends. The sentiments expressed in it in regard to British connection I had often expressed before; and I have repeatedly expressed publicly my concurrence in unrestricted reciprocity also.

#### CONFIDENCE IN MR. LAURIER.

As for the Liberal leader in Dominion affairs, our eloquent friend Mr. Laurier has no follower in any of the Provinces who honors him more than I do, has greater confidence in his patriotism and uprightness, or is more glad to follow him. I am sure that so far as his influence and policy may affect the question of annexation, should that question ever have to be practically dealt with in our time, that influence will not be exerted or that policy designed to promote the annexation and surrender of our country to any other power. I am sure that it is for the common interest that Mr. Laurier should continue to have as leader the undivided confidence and support of the Liberal party in all the Provinces. It is in the public interest that his following in the House of Commons should be maintained and strengthened.

#### CANADIAN POLICY FOR THE FUTURE.

I hope that in the approaching bye-elections the Liberal candidates will receive the active and zealous support of the whole party. If any lover of British connection hesitates about giving this support let him bear in mind that a principal objection urged



in the United States against reciprocity is that it would prevent political union, instead of furthering it. The true view I apprehend is, that it would have no effect on that question either way. It certainly will have none if the attachment of the Canadian people of British origin to the country of their fathers is as great as we now believe it to be. Let us all then continue to stand on the party's accepted platform as a whole—just laws, a pure administration, economical government, unrestricted reciprocity of trade relations in regard to the products of the two countries, whether natural or manufactured; and British connection until the time comes for Canada to take its place in the world as one of its independent nations.

Tory sympathy for the South in the civil war lost to us the former reciprocity treaty. The Tory so-called National Policy has given to our farmers the McKinley tariff besides accomplishing a host of other bad things. The hope of Canada now lies in the Liberal party. Let no Canadian Liberals help to bar its progress or lessen its usefulness by favoring, or seeming to favor, the transfer of their country and its allegiance to any foreign power. Some of our farmers, Conservatives and Liberals alike, may talk somewhat wildly when they think of the markets from which to their loss they are excluded; but I undertake to say that never, as a matter of deliberate action, will either they or any other important section of Canadians consent to sell their country and its nationality for gold or greenbacks, whether in prospect or in promise. They will live on as they are, in hope of better things from a better Government.

Yours very faithfully,

O. MOWAT.

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#### APPENDIX.

The following was Mr. Mowat's letter to Dr. McKay, M.P.P., for South Oxford, with reference to the Woodstock meeting of 24th November, 1891:—

TORONTO, 23rd November, 1891.

MY DEAR DR. MCKAY,—With reference to our conversation this morning I desire to reiterate my strong opinion that it would

not be good policy for the friends of British connection and the old flag to stay away from Mr. Solomon White's meeting at Woodstock to-morrow. By doing so, or not voting at the meeting, they would enable annexationists to carry a resolution in favor of their views, and to trumpet it throughout the Dominion and elsewhere as the sentiment of the community as a whole. If in the loyal town of Woodstock, thriving beyond most, if not all, the other towns of Ontario, the capital of the banner county of Canadian Liberalism, formerly represented by the great champion of both British connection and Liberal principles, the Hon. George Brown, and noted heretofore for its fidelity at once to the old flag and to the Liberal views; if in such a place a resolution were carried at a public meeting to which all had been invited, no subsequent explanation as to the thinness of the attendance, or as to the contemptuous absence of opponents would, outside of Oxford, have any weight.

There are in most counties a few annexationists; in some counties more than in others; but the aggregate number in the Dominion, I am sure, is small as compared with the aggregate population. The great majority of our people, I believe and trust, are not prepared to hand over this great Dominion to a foreign nation for any present commercial consideration which may be proposed. We love our Sovereign, and we are proud of our status as British subjects. The imperial authorities have refused nothing in the way of self-government which our representatives have asked for. Our complaints are against Parliaments and Governments which acquired their power from our own people. To the United States and its people we are all most friendly. We recognise the advantages which would go to both them and us from extended trade relations, and we are willing to go as far in that direction as shall not involve, now or in the future, political union; but there Canadians of every party have hitherto drawn the line, and I trust will continue to draw the line. We do not wish to disconnect ourselves with the motherland, unless it should be by-and-bye to set up for ourselves as an independent nation in friendly alliance with that land, if no longer in political connection with it. But the time for absolute independence has not come. The strongest tie between the Provinces of the Dominion

at this moment is British connection and all that such connection implies. British connection should therefore be cherished by all practical means until other ties and the mutual interests of the Provinces become strong enough to secure their union and their independence as a nation. North America is amply large enough for two independent nations; and two friendly nations would be better for both populations than one nation embracing the whole continent.

I am glad to believe that these are your views as well as mine; and I should strongly advise that as many as may be of our constituents who hold them should endeavor to attend the meeting to-morrow, and should carry a resolution, repudiating annexation or any present change in our political relations. Such a resolution would show that we love our own nation better than any other nation, and our own institutions better than the institutions of any other country; that we are prepared to sacrifice something if necessary—though I do not suppose any sacrifice will be necessary—in order to retain the allegiance of this great Dominion to the Sovereign we love, instead of suffering it to be transferred to another nation which may any day be at war with our own nation, the nation of our fathers.

For Liberals there is an additional reason for maintaining our political relation with the fatherland, in that the electorate of Great Britain and Ireland has recently been so extended that the Government and Parliament are now, and shall henceforward be more than ever before, under the control of the body of the people.

Agreeably to your suggestion, I have thus hastily stated my long cherished views; and these views and sentiments I hold very strongly. I believe and trust that they are the views and sentiments of the great majority of the Liberals, and of the Conservatives also, of the County of Oxford; and I am very anxious that the county, whose honored representatives you and I are, should not be misrepresented or misunderstood. I wish the Dominion to know that Oxford has not forgotten the dear lands—England, Ireland or Scotland—from which most of its population, they or their fathers, have come. There is no more enlightened or civilized

or free nation in the world, and I venture to say there is no nation that Oxford or its representatives can now be induced to prefer.

Yours faithfully,

O. MOWAT.

The Rev. Dr. McMullen of Woodstock was one of the speakers at the Woodstock meeting, and one of his statements having afterwards been controverted, he addressed to the *Globe* the following letter in reply:—

SIR,—In a letter in to-day's *Globe*, Mr. W. Sloan controverts a statement of mine at the Woodstock meeting when, in replying to Mr. Solomon White, M.P.P., I used the words, "The condition of the Ontario (not Canadian) farmer is superior to that of the United States farmer." That statement, to the correctness of which I still adhere, was made with reference to the general comfort enjoyed by Ontario farmers. I know of no agricultural region in the States that in point of fine rolling country, pure water and pure air, fertile soil, beautiful orchards, fine barns and outbuildings, and comfortable farm houses will bear comparison with Western Ontario. Take the average gathering of Ontario farmers and their families, as you see them at a county or other agricultural exhibition, and in no country in the world will you find their superior as regards being well kept, well clad, and other signs of well-to-do circumstances.

The farmers of the United States constitute one of the poorest classes in the nation. Throughout vast sections of the fertile West they can raise nothing but corn, and a barn is not to be seen; they keep no poultry, and hence, but for an insane tariff, the excellent market for Canadian eggs. The United States tariff has been intended to coerce us into annexation. Are we brought to such a pass, and are we so absolutely under their thumb that we must confess ourselves "dead beat," and as "a dead beat" knock at the door of Uncle Sam and ask for shelter? I mistake the self-respect of the Canadian people if that proposition is going to find favor with them. Honorable and mutually advantageous trade relations Canadians are earnestly hoping to see inaugurated, and we are suffering severely through lack of them; but it is far

better for a nation to suffer than to be humiliated. We have most grossly mismanaged our affairs; but when a man sees he has done that, the next wisest step is not to go begging. There is no flag so identified with the cause of Christian civilization and humanity as that to which we hold allegiance. As regards our being a free people, we have as large a measure of freedom as they have in the States, and far more self-government than we have been making a good use of. There is no trade arrangement which the States are willing to enter into with us to which the mother country is not willing to consent. We tax her goods and she throws her market open to ours. In view of all these facts of the case, I fail to see how our recent decision is deserving of being characterized as "sentimental" rather than "practical." But even if sentiment did stir the meeting—and I admit it did—let me say that a people without sentiment fall below the average standard of humanity, and are fit only for being slaves or paupers. Sentiment has been one of the most potent factors in the rise and development of great nations of the past, the very inspiration of their noblest achievements; and its decline the unfailing symptom of national decay and overthrow. I quite agree with Mr. Sloan that some change is imperative, but I maintain at the same time that grumbling is a very popular sin, that many of our Canadian people do not know their mercies, that a worse thing may befall a nation than the necessity of practising economy, that the farmers of Canada rule us all, and have the remedy in their own hands, and that we might well be ashamed of ourselves in Oxford had we indicated that a change of allegiance by a high-minded people is an easily entertained proposal.

W. T. McMULLEN.

Woodstock, Dec. 3rd.

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